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"APPROBATION.

"We hereby approve of this translation of Baldeschi's work on the ecclesiastical ceremonies.

N. CARD. WISEMAN.

"Westminster, Aug. 2, 1853."

So, then, Mr. Burke read to them, out of page 159—"Before the celebrant turns towards the people, the second master of ceremonies should give notice to the highest dignitary of the choir, in order that, vested in the usual habit of the choir, without stole, according to a decree of the sacred congregation of rites, of Feb. 14, 1705, he may stand in readiness on the highest step, to give the candle to the celebrant. This candle is given to him by the deacon, who kisses it, but not the hand of the priest. The celebrant also kisses it on receiving it, and afterwards presents it to the sub-deacon, who receives it with the ordinary kisses, and deposits it on the altar. The celebrant, having afterwards taken another candle," &c.; and so the kissing goes on.

"And, your reverence, was that always done in the Church?" said Pat.

"Well, I suppose," said Mr. Burke, "it could not be older than the blessing of candles on Candlemass-day."

"And how old is that?" said Pat.

"Here is a book, written by a very learned Roman Catholic, who searched for that," said Mr. Burke; "and he says he could find nothing about it in any of the service-books of any Church, for 900 years after Christ. But stay," said Mr. Burke, "the man behind the door might say I was wrong, so I will write it out for you to give him;" so he wrote them a paper, which we will print at the end of this.

"And will your reverence tell us what are blessed candles good for?" said Jem.

"I cannot tell you much about that," said Mr. Burke. "This book" says, indeed, (p. 233) that in lesser churches the priest 'sits upon a seat prepared on the gospel side (of the altar), covers, and gives an instruction to the people upon the institution of this solemnity, upon the mystic significations, and the advantages of blessed candles;' but the book does not give the discourse, so I cannot tell what is in it. All I know about it is, from a form of blessing candles, printed at the end of the mass-book (p. xcvi.) where the priest prays over them thus:—". . . Let them (the candles) receive such a benediction by the sign of the holy cross, that in whatever places they are lighted or placed, the princes of darkness may depart, and tremble, and fly in consternation, with all their ministers, from those habitations; nor presume any more to disquiet or molest those who serve thee, the Omnipotent God."

"And what does your reverence think of that prayer?" said Jem.

"I think," said Mr. Burke, "that God hears the prayer of faith; and the prayer of faith must be founded on the Word or promise of God. St. James says (ch. iv. 7, Douay Bible), 'Resist the devil, and he will fly from you;' and St. Peter himself says of the devil, 'whom resist ye, strong in faith' (1 Peter, v. 9). These are God's promises about driving away the devil; but no apostle says, 'light candles to drive away the devil;' if we resist him and pray to God to accomplish his own promise, that is the prayer of faith that God will hear; but if we light candles, and pray that candles may drive away the devil, that prayer rests on human inventions; it has no promise from God; it cannot be the prayer of faith."

"Well, your reverence," said Jem, "I think that's right; and if blessed candles was the thing to keep away the enemy of souls, would Christ and his apostles have left his Church without them for NINE HUNDRED YEARS?"

So Pat and Jem were going away, when Mr. Burke called out to them—"Will you go and buy blessed candles now?" And Pat answered him—"Your reverence, I would rather put the money in a Douay Bible: doesn't Christ himself say, 'I am the light of the world; he that followeth me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life?' and wasn't that said before there was any blessed candles at all? And isn't that better nor candles?"—John viii. 12.

So as they were going out of the door, Mr. Burke said, "Now be sure you show the paper to the man behind the door, and tell him every word I said."

"Never fear, your reverence," said Pat; "we will surely."

So we think the man behind the door has it by this time; and whatever he sends us to print, we will print it, without even asking his name; and we hope he will get the priest to help him.

The paper given by Mr. Burke to Pat, to show to "the man behind the door."

"De benedictione cereorum nulla fit mentio apud Amalrium, Valfridum, et vulgatum Alcuinum, qui cereos tantum a Pontifice dari asserit. Sed neque in Gelasiano, Gregoriano, Gellonensi, aliisque supra nongentos annos scriptis sacramentariis aliquid ea de re extat. In antiquo missali ecclesie Turonensis ante annos 800 scripto unica ad luminaria benedicenda reperitur" (Tractatus de antiqua ecclesie Disciplina se, by Edmund Martene, a Benedictine monk. Edit. Lugdan, 1706; p. 117.)

Which we thus translate, for the convenience of our readers:—

* "The Cereomonal," mentioned above.

"Concerning the blessing of wax candles, no mention is made in Amalarius, Walfrid, or the Vulgate copy of Alcuin, who only states that wax candles were given by the Pope; neither in the Gelasian, or Gregorian Sacramentaries, or in that at Gello, or in others, written above 900 years ago, is there any mention made about that matter. In an ancient missal of the Church of Tours, written about 800 years ago (i.e., about 906), one only mention is found about blessing candles."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The great mass of communications with which we are favoured renders it impossible for us to insert everything we could desire as promptly as we could wish. At this moment several articles, actually in type, are necessarily omitted for want of room, though we have incurred considerable expense in giving some extra pages in our present number.

A letter from Mr. Rourke reached us too late for present number, but will be inserted in our next. To diminish the chance of disappointment, all letters should be forwarded to the office by the first day of the month.

All letters to be addressed to the Editor, 9, Upper Sackville-st. We would request our correspondents, both Roman Catholics and Protestants, to limit the length of their communications, and not to discuss a variety of distinct topics in one letter.

Contributors of £1 per annum will be furnished with six copies, any of which will be forwarded, as directed, to nominees of the subscriber. Any one receiving any number of the journal which has not been paid for or ordered by himself, will not be charged for it, and may assume that it has been paid for by a subscriber.

We have to thank several obliging friends for assisting us with copies of Nos. 2, 8, and 11, to complete sets of Vol. I. which is in great demand. Nos. 3 and 4 have already been reprinted. If any of our friends could oblige us with additional copies of Nos. 2, 8, or 11, they would be very acceptable, and might save us the heavy expense of reprinting them, which, however, we purpose doing, if necessary.

The Catholic Layman.

DUBLIN, JANUARY, 1854.

In commencing the third volume of our periodical we feel that it is unnecessary to detain our readers with any lengthened statement of our plans and intentions for the coming year. Our course for the last two years lies before them; and the reception we have met with gives us every encouragement to pursue steadily the path we have hitherto trod. The principal object for which our paper was established was the discussion, in a candid and Christian spirit, of the momentous points of difference between Protestants and Roman Catholics. In the conduct of this controversy we have studied to exclude from our pages all intemperate and abusive language, and (as far as human frailty would permit) we have endeavoured to contend, not for victory, but for truth. We have ever felt that the errors of those who mistake on questions which concern their eternal salvation, are a subject for pity and not for anger; and we know that it would be a miserable victory on such subjects as these, to make the worse appear the better reason, and to gain a momentary triumph, which must be followed by bitter remorse hereafter. Accordingly, it has been our constant care to deal fairly with those who differ from us. We have cheerfully printed and given our best consideration to every letter which has been addressed to us by Roman Catholic correspondents, requiring only that such letters shall contain arguments, and not mere vulgar declamation or personal scurrility. In the articles which have emanated from ourselves we have always desired to consider the *strongest* arguments that could be advanced on the Roman Catholic side of the question; and we have sought such arguments

in the authorized statements of that Church, and in the works of her best writers. Should our Roman Catholic friends find that we omit to notice any strong argument on their side of the question, bearing on a subject of which we treat, they may be assured the omission is not intentional; and they will do us a service (even when they may not feel competent to write on the subject themselves) by referring us to the places in the works of their divines containing the arguments which they may think we ought to have attempted to answer.

Our reason for the course we have followed is simple enough. It is because *truth* is our only object, and because we are persuaded that the more thoroughly truth is searched and examined into, the more clearly will its evidence appear. It is only falsehood which shrinks from the light and dreads to face inquiry.

We feel, however, that we have some reason to complain that we have got no assistance in our inquiries from those who claim the office of guides to truth for the people. We have addressed repeated invitations to the Roman Catholic clergy, offering to open to them our pages for a temperate statement of their arguments in defence of their faith. Since every number of our journal meets with many thousand readers, it might be supposed that such an offer as this would be acceptable to any of them who desired the extension of their religion, and who supposed that that extension could be effected by the use of reason and argument. But as yet, no Roman Catholic clergyman has accepted our offer, and we are forced to add, that the means which that body employ to secure the allegiance of their flocks is, generally, not the use of reason and argument, but the inculcation of blind submission to authority, and too often the suppression of free discussion by personal abuse, and, when practicable, by physical force. They surely must have some account to give for conduct so likely to raise a prejudice against them in all impartial minds—conduct not like that of men who knew they had truth on their side, which would bear to be searched and looked into, but like that of people who, for personal ends of their own, desired, at all hazards, to detain men in one particular set of opinions.

Some of them have endeavoured to explain the course which, as a body, they have followed, by drawing an alarming picture of the errors into which some, not members of their Church, have fallen; and by thence inferring that submission to authority is the only mode of preserving men in the truth, but that free discussion must lead to unbridled scepticism and infidelity. The fear of infidelity is one of the principal instruments they employ to detain wavering minds in their communion. To those who are inclined to doubt, they say—believe all we tell you, or you shall believe nothing. In their arguments with Protestants, several of their divines borrow their weapons from the hands of infidels, and in the recklessness with which they defend their peculiar tenets, at the expense of our common Christianity, remind us of the conduct of pirates, who would rather blow up the vessel of which they have unlawfully taken possession, than yield it back to its rightful owners.

We should never have undertaken the labour and pains which the conduct of this journal, for the past two years, has involved, if we had not some better prospect to look forward to than the fearful gulf of hopeless unbelief. It is precisely because we believe that we are ourselves in possession of truths which will make men "wise unto salvation," and which can be proved by the clearest evidence, that we invite others to a full examination of the grounds of our conviction. We are assured that the course we adopt is the only effectual safeguard against infidelity—the only way to give men a firm hold of the truth.

If a system is presented for a man's acceptance which contains truth, mixed up with error, how is he to separate the latter from the former, if he has always been in the habit of yielding a blind submission to authority? And when he discerns, as he is always in danger of doing, the falsity of parts of the system which he believes, will he not run the risk of rejecting the whole system together, and thus of sacrificing, perhaps, several important and fundamental truths?

The danger to which we have just adverted is by no means an imaginary one: it was fatally verified in France at the close of the last century. In the reign of Louis XIV. there was a large body of Protestants in France, and considerable freedom of opinion existed in that country. This was a state of things which found no favour in the eyes of the spiritual advisers of the French King. They never ceased importuning him to banish all the Protestants from his kingdom, and thus to put down freedom of discussion by physical force. Their efforts were but too successful. By the revocation of the edict of Nantes several hundred thousand Protestants were driven from France, and many of those who remained were forced, by the terror of death, to abandon the religion of their fathers, and become members of the Church of Rome. For a time, therefore, the system of enforcing a compulsory silence with regard to religion, seemed to have succeeded, and the priests and ministers of Romanism appeared to have every thing their own way. But what was the result? The human mind will not long brook the shackles by which authority would seek to restrain it; men must and will think for themselves. The intelligent part of the French population soon began to have a vivid perception of the errors of the Romish system; and having no practical acquaintance with any other form of Christianity, rejected all the truths of the Bible, and plunged into open infidelity. No amount of unbelief which has ever existed in a Protestant country can compare for a moment with the fearful spectacle which France presented in the closing years of the eighteenth century, when every feeling of respect for Christianity was obliterated, and when death was publicly proclaimed to be an "eternal sleep." It is absurd to suppose that this giant monster of unbelief could have sprung up in a moment: it was only the removal of the restraints imposed by the iron hand of authority, which then unveiled the doubts that had long lurked in the minds of thinking men, and having never been encountered by reason, at length hurried them to the most extravagant absurdities.

We now think that we have shown that by our readiness to "give a reason of the hope that is in us," we are not only no friends to unbelief, but give the most convincing proof of the strength of our faith in the truths which we profess. A man who believes that the piece of gold in his purse is genuine metal and of full weight, will be ready, when called on, to allow it to be weighed, and have its purity tested; and by doing so, he evinces his faith that the coin is what it professes to be; but the man who will neither make the trial himself, nor suffer others to do so, inevitably gives rise to a suspicion that he does not himself believe that his coin is pure, unadulterated gold. And so it is with the doctrines of religion. St. Paul admonished his hearers to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good;" and those persons are no true friends to Christianity, but rather the reverse, who would deter others from following this precept of the apostle. We have shown above how Roman Catholic teachers lead their hearers to infidelity, by inculcating a blind submission to authority; and on a future occasion we will show how they do so more directly by the nature of the arguments which they employ.

THE HEIR OF BALLYMANUS.

Continued from page 6.

When, however, Frank next saw Edith, he did not find it easy to carry on the line of argument which his friend had suggested. He found her pained and shocked rather than perplexed by the course of reasoning which Mr. Oldham had followed on the previous day. He found her belief that the Bible was the Word of God rooted too strongly for him to shake. She said that independently of all external testimony, the force with which its words had been brought home by the Holy Spirit to her heart, gave her assurance that it came from God; and Frank, though he did not think this satisfactory, did not like to distress her by questioning it. Again, he could make no impression on her by arguments drawn from the difficulty of understanding the Bible. No doubt, said she, there is much in the Bible that I do not understand: but is there any reason why I should not make use of what I can?—I can find my Saviour in it, I can learn from it the way of salvation; it tells me that it was written to make me wise unto salvation; every time I study it I draw from it fresh lessons in heavenly wisdom, and shall I be justified in rejecting them, only because my curiosity cannot be gratified on some points on which I might desire information?

As Frank found himself fail in making an impression on Edith, his own faith began to waver in one dogma which it had hitherto never occurred to him to question, the impossibility of salvation out of the Church of Rome. The more he thought of Edith, so pure, so gentle, so wholly free from thought of self, whose whole happiness seemed to consist in giving happiness to those about her, the more shocking he felt the idea that she must be lost forever. Hitherto he had imagined that outside his own Church there might be morality, but could be no real piety; and yet it seemed to him now that the piety of Edith was as real and as sincere, her devotion as fervent as—yes, he could not deny it—as even that of his own mother.

He ventured to ask Mr. Oldham whether it was certain that none without the Church could be saved. "There can be no doubt of it," said Mr. Oldham, whose merciless logic never feared to look a consequence in the face. It is true that all our doctors make an exception for the case of invincible ignorance; and some of them, who seem afraid to follow out their principles, would fain represent all ignorance as invincible which has not been actually conquered. But in my opinion those in this country who have been called on to submit to the Church, and who have had full opportunity for learning her claims on their obedience, and yet refuse to submit are absolutely without excuse. It may be very dreadful, but I fear it is true.

Frank's reason was without reply, but his heart refused to assent. He redoubled his endeavours, however, to convince Edith, and finding that Mr. Oldham's plan of bringing her into the Church by the use of infidel arguments was eminently distasteful to her, he prepared to meet her on her own ground. For surely, said he to himself, since the Church has in each case decided rightly, it cannot be difficult to show that her decisions are agreeable to Scripture and reason, and history. And accordingly he laboured for several weeks at the study of the whole controversy with all his characteristic energy; but he was sadly disappointed in the result of his inquiries.

And when next he came to Mr. Oldham it was with the complaint. Father, said he, I find that whatever be the arguments to prove that the Church cannot err, it is more and more forcing itself on my mind that she actually has erred. I shall only mention two points which I have lately studied particularly. First, as to the canon. It seems to me as certain as any fact in history, that our Lord and his Apostles used the same books of the Old Testament Scripture which were admitted by the Jews with whom they argued; and that the canon of the Jews did not include the books which are called apocryphal, and does not to this day. I find that all the earliest catalogues of canonical books given by Christian writers do not include these books. The early Eastern Church is unanimous against them. In the west, the learned St. Jerome declares that the Church reads those books, but does not receive them into the number of the canonical Scriptures. Even those who do call them canonical regard them as inferior to the rest. In the Council of Trent itself the divines acknowledged their inferiority, so that it seems to me that the final decree of the Council on this subject is glaringly at variance with historic truth. Again, with regard to the religious use of images, it seems to me that if we are to take the words of Scripture in their plain natural sense, it is absolutely forbidden. The early Christians certainly understood it so; they would not tolerate from the heathen apologies for the use of images, precisely the same as those we are forced to employ ourselves; and many of them superstitiously believed the very trade of the statuary to be absolutely unlawful. I find images at first only introduced into churches for ornament, and for the historical information of the unlearned; and yet that even this innocent use of them was violently opposed by eminent bishops of the Church. I find the veneration of images only established, after the most violent opposition, at the second Council of Nice, and that by arguments the most absurd and unfair that can be imagined. And when I see the extravagant superstition to which image worship has given rise among the unlearned, it is forcing itself on my mind, that on this point also the Protestants are right, and the Church wrong.

Mr. Oldham listened in speechless horror, and then replied—

"I am deeply grieved, Frank, but scarcely surprised at the result of the course you have taken. The only question you, or any other layman, have to consider is, that of the authority of the Church. It is not for you to re-open questions which have been long since tried and decided by higher authority than yours. The only result of such a course would be to land you in hopeless infidelity."

"But," urged Frank, "these are all questions of mere historical fact, which I have studied with great care, and on which I think my education as a lawyer renders me peculiarly qualified to form an opinion."

"My dear Frank," returned Mr. Oldham, "suppose, now, that I were to qualify myself by several weeks' hard study to pass a judgment upon the Lord Chancellor's last decision, I have no doubt I could find plenty of ingenious arguments to prove that his judgment was quite erroneous: nay, I have no doubt that I could make out a plausible case to show that the whole law is a gigantic system of fraud, got up solely for the profit of the lawyers. No doubt, in my proof, I should fall into abundance of errors, which you or any other practised lawyer would detect at once; but, notwithstanding, my arguments would seem to the unlearned very plausible and convincing. But, however, do you not think it better that we should each stick to his own profession? I shall be content to take my law from you, when I want it, and, in the meantime, you may be content to take the doctrines of religion from those who are authorized to teach them."

Frank went away silenced for that time, but he returned some days after—

"Father," said he, "since our last interview I have been endeavouring to submit to the authority of the Church my own judgment as to the meaning of Scripture, and as to the facts of history; but, you will allow that the authority of the Church, to which so great a sacrifice must be made, ought itself to rest on a strong foundation. Now, I want you to assist in strengthening my faith in this great truth; for it seems to me useless to think of proving it from Scripture, since I know that Scripture depends altogether for its authority on the infallibility of the Church. I suppose it must rest ultimately on the evidence for the first miracles of our religion, and yet, you hinted the other day that infidels could explain these away by the help of electricity and mesmerism."

Mr. Oldham replied—"I know that some of our divines do appeal to Scripture in order to prove the infallibility of the Church, but I shall not be so inconsistent as to suppose that Scripture can have any authority without the foundation of the Church; nor shall I treat the texts which speak of the Church as if they were the only ones, plain, and evident, and easy to be interpreted by private judgment. Nor again shall I bewilder you by an appeal to miracles or prophecy: such a course, I know, must inevitably end in incurable scepticism. No, Frank, your doubts are not to be removed by reasoning; they are to be got rid of by penances, by believing, and praying. Surrender your mind to the truth: throw yourself into the system, and you will find the act bring its own evidence with it. A simple-minded woman, like your mother, to whom it never occurred to doubt the truth of our religion, has greater certainty of its truth than those who are able to answer the subtlest arguments heretics or infidels have invented—than Bellarmine, or Wiseman, or Perrone. The authority of the Church is not a thing to be proved by sorites, and enthymemes, and syllogisms; it is a doctrine which comes wafted to us in full tradition on the western breeze; and holy fathers re-echo it in intellectual expressions, and it is poured to and fro in broken harmonies, in closets and on the house-tops: and sacred virgins repeat it to us in their calm, sweet voices, and monks, spare with fasting, resound it in their deep rich tones; and it pervades us like an atmosphere, and fills every corner of each Catholic heart. And can heretics find evidence like this in all the works of Paley, or Grotius, or Chalmers, or Sumner!"

Frank was awed by his friend's eloquence, the general drift of which he understood, though, perhaps, he did not understand the exact meaning of each particular phrase; and Mr. Oldham went on to say—

"Frank, I fear that it is your heart, not your head, which suggests these difficulties to you."

"Nay, father," cried Frank, "there you do me injustice; the Catholic religion is twined round every fibre of my heart. I could not abandon it without doing violence to my earliest impressions and my heart's best affections. I should break the heart of my mother; I should wound to the quick my sisters and my other relatives, who look up to me as the representative of an ancient family, whose allegiance to the Catholic faith has never wavered. No, father, I can almost say that, be her doctrines true or be they false, the dearest wish of my heart is, that Edith could be prevailed on to embrace them."

"Then," replied Mr. Oldham, "my advice to you is, to withdraw your mind wholly from controversy; to content yourself with prayers to the Blessed Virgin for Miss Hartwell's conversion, and for the satisfying of your own doubts; and to practise the penances which, at your next confession, I shall impose on you."

To a certain extent Frank followed this advice: he was diligent in prayers and in the practice of austerities, some recommended by his confessor and many added by him-